



**Pennsylvania Association
Of Federal Program Coordinators
LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE
NCLB REAUTHORIZATION RECOMMENDATIONS**

FUNDING

1. **Increase the funding of the Title I basic grant in addition to the targeted and Education Financial Incentive Grants (EFIG) to permit every school district to implement the requirements of NCLB.**
 - Districts which lose funds for multiple years because they do not qualify for targeted or EFIG grants cannot continue to meet the rigid requirements of NCLB. The basic and concentration grants have not received an increase under NCLB funding and the basic grant is the only grant that does not discriminate against poor children because of where they live, but treats all poor children equally.
2. **Implement 100% hold harmless for a period of two years in order to provide continuity of funding and services necessary for school districts to implement the requirements of NCLB and meet its overall goals.**
 - Districts which lose funds for multiple years because their poor population decreases as part of the whole poor population cannot continue to meet the rigid requirements of NCLB. Requirements and consequences in NCLB do not diminish concurrently with decreasing fiscal resources.
3. **Fund school improvement from a set aside to permit the funds to go to the districts and schools that are greatest in need and have the highest concentrations of poor without negatively impacting other Title I schools.**
 - The current 4% set aside for school improvement is not a simple off the top set aside. Presently these funds can only be taken from districts with gains as the set aside cannot reduce the amount of funds any district receives from one year to the next. This means that the districts with the highest concentrations of poor are supporting school improvement activities in other districts, many with lower concentrations of poor.

ACCOUNTABILITY

4. **When identifying schools for improvement using subgroup data only, identify a school if the same subgroup, in the same content area, fails to make AYP for 2 consecutive years.**
 - Currently when districts and schools are identified for improvement based on subgroup performance, they are required to develop an improvement plan for the particular subgroup(s). If in the following year another subgroup or content area does not make AYP, the district/school must now change the improvement plan for that subgroup. Even though the district and school may be making AYP in the initial subgroup, as a whole they continue to advance through stages of school improvement.
5. **Continue to permit school districts and schools to calculate AYP using only the Title I participants in targeted assisted schools.**
 - Provide statutory language on how States and schools are to correctly implement the legislated option of calculating AYP using only Title I participants. USDE failed for three years to provide any written Guidance to states or districts on section 1116(c) (4) and CFR §200.30(b).

6. Continue to permit school districts to administer appropriate assessments based on alternate achievement standards for special populations.

- Regarding the special education population, eliminate the 1% regulation for alternate assessment and the proposed 2% cap on students assessed under modified assessment since they are not based on scientifically based research. Insert statutory language that requires school districts to use percentages based on actual numbers that correlate with the IEPs in the school districts if they choose to use an alternate or modified assessment.
- The regulations affecting the participation of English Language Learners in state assessment programs have been modified. Students who have been in the country for less than two years should be exempt from taking both the reading and math assessments. Not until year three should their results be counted towards adequate yearly progress (AYP). In addition, based on current research regarding academic language acquisition, once they are no longer considered to be ELL students, their assessments should be included in the ELL subgroup for three years, not the current two years. Performance expectations need to be ambitious, but realistically attainable.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

7. Permit school districts to use SES in place of School Choice for schools identified for improvement.

- School Choice is not a viable option in many cases. School districts that have multiple schools in school improvement at the same grade levels, school districts that have only a single school at certain grade levels, and rural schools that are separated by significant distance are just a few examples.

8. Fund the SES program with a separate set aside or as part of the 21st Century Community Learning Center Program.

- The current process of funding SES by decreasing the funds available in an LEA's Title I allocation creates an adverse relationship. In many cases, school districts must eliminate funds for successful intervention programs with highly qualified staff for unproven tutoring by non qualified staff. Having the SES program as a set aside would create an incentive for school districts rather than the penalty that currently exists.

9. Allow the highly qualified LEA and school staff to be SES providers regardless of the LEA/school improvement status.

- Currently a double standard exists wherein districts are already held to higher standards than other providers by being required to employ only highly qualified staff.

FLEXIBILITY

10. Continue the Ed Flex Program. States have the ability to use the Ed Flex program as method of providing Title I services to additional schools and poor students while guaranteeing that the current poor students being served are performing well.

Any questions, concerns or comments please direct them to Executive Director Jim M. Sheffer jmsheffer@aol.com